

Introduction to the Book of Proverbs

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In this short Book my goal is to give you a introduction to one of the most beloved books of the Bible and that is the Book of Proverbs. Proverbs a Book of 915 verses which are in 31 chapters which one can read everyday, one chapter for each day of the month since a month has 29 to 31 days. Jesus while on earth many times spoke in parables and he spoke in proverbs aswell.

(Luke 4:23) He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'" (NKJV)

(John 16:25) "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is

coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. (NKJV)

(John 16:29) His disciples said to Him, "See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! (NKJV)

Those words of figurative Language in John 16:25 and figure of speech in John 16:29 is in the Greek is [παροιμία paroimia](#) and it means proverb.

Collins Cobuild English Dictionary states about what a proverb mean {"A proverb is a short sentence that people often quote, which gives advice or tells you something about life. An old Arab proverb says, 'The enemy of my enemy is my friend'."}

You might remember certain proverbs people often quote like:

"A Penny saved is a penny earned"

" Waste not, want not"

Throughout the world one can find proverbs aka wise sayings. And in the Book of Proverbs we have a collection of them. Written by different men. Most of them was written by Solomon.

The Jews loves proverbs and to speak in proverbs especially in Jesus time and in the time of Solomon who authored most of the Proverbs in the Book of Proverbs.

King Solomon reign over the united Kingdom of Israel and Judah in 970-930 BC.

The Liberals deny Solomon's authorship in the Book of Proverbs but they state it was written in his time and after. Example of this can be found in The New Oxford Annotated Bible page 769 but they do find parallels between Proverbs and the writings of Amen-em-aope who was alive in 1,000 B.C. I don't hold or ever will hold the Liberal view but I just have it written down as a side note if the Book of Proverbs claims parts of it was written by Solomon why not just believe it!

We can speak of at least 4 different authors to the book of Proverbs.

1) Solomon

(Proverbs 1:1) The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: (NKJV)

(Proverbs 10:1) The Proverbs of Solomon: A wise son makes a glad father, But a foolish son is the grief of his mother. (NKJV)

(Proverbs 25:1) These also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied: (NKJV)

Notice that what we have are in Proverbs are the ones King Hezekiah had copied out.

Here we have a collection of Solomons proverbs but not all of his proverbs are mention since Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs

(1 Kings 4:32) He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five. (NKJV)

2) Wise men

We don't know how many wise men.

(Proverbs 22:17) Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your heart to my knowledge; (NKJV)

(Proverbs 24:23) These things also belong to the wise: It is not good to show partiality in judgment. (NKJV)

Among thier writings you will find a great poem about the drunkard.

(Proverbs 23:29-35) Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?" (NKJV)

These group of wise men may be in referance in Jeremiah 18:18

(Jeremiah 18:18) Then they said, "Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come and let us attack him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words." (NKJV)

They were men of knowledge who gave advise on spiritual matters and things which

they observe.

3) Agur son of Jakeh of Massa

(Proverbs 30:1) The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, his utterance. This man declared to Ithiel-to Ithiel and Ucal: (NKJV)

Among his writing you will find a prayer, prophecy and the idea of God having a son.

(Proverbs 30:2-4) Surely I am more stupid than any man, And do not have the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom Nor have knowledge of the Holy One. Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, If you know? (NKJV)

4) Lemuel , King of Massa

He gets his proverbs from his mother.

(Proverbs 31:1) The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him: (NKJV)

Among his writings you will find the virtuous wife, or woman just maybe when thinking about this woman he had his mother in mind who taught him those proverbs.

(Proverbs 31:10-31) Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil All the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands. She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar. She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maid-servants. She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard. She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms. She perceives that her merchandise is good, And her lamp does not go out by night. She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hand holds the spindle. She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household is clothed with scarlet. She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies sashes for the merchants. Strength and honor are her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness. She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her: "Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all." Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates. (NKJV)

These last two are from Massa and are not Jews but Ishmaelites . Massa is a tribe from the sons of Ishmael who is Isaac's brother.

(Genesis 25:13-14) And these were the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, (NKJV)

When he speaks about this worthy woman he does so in alphabetical order so that the first letter of the first word in each verse is in Jewish Alphabet . The first letter in the verse 10 starts with the letter Aleph the next verse will start with the letter Bet and so on. Till all the 22 letters of the Jewish alphabet is mention. Just like Psalms 119 does it in different sections Proverbs 31 does it in verses.

CJB

- 10 { נ } Who can find a capable wife? Her value is far beyond that of pearls.
- 11 { כ } Her husband trusts her from his heart, and she will prove a great asset to him.
- 12 { א } She works to bring him good, not harm, all the days of her life.
- 13 { ת } She procures a supply of wool and flax and works with willing hands.
- 14 { נ } She is like those merchant vessels, bringing her food from far away.
- 15 { י } It's still dark when she rises to give food to her household and orders to the young women serving her.

Things of importants in the Book of Proverbs is the comparisons of opponents the wise man or woman to that foolish man or woman.

Wise Son / Foolish Son

(Proverbs 10:1) The Proverbs of Solomon: A wise son makes a glad father, But a foolish

son is the grief of his mother. (NKJV)

Wise in Heart / The Fool

(Proverbs 10:8) The wise in heart will receive commands, But a prating fool will fall.
(NKJV)

Wise woman / Foolish woman

(Proverbs 14:1) The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands. (NKJV)

Fool / Wise

(Proverbs 14:3) In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them. (NKJV)

1) The fool according to the hebrew is one who is stupid , a simpleton , easy to deceive , arrogant person

In many respects the Jewish leaders in Jesus time was fools , Jesus called them fools for not believing in him as the Messiah and for looking at the little things of importance but missing out on the big issues.

(Matthew 23:17) "Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? (NKJV)

(Matthew 23:19) "Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? (NKJV)

And Jesus called his own disciples fools for not believing the scriptures of what they had to say about him.

(Luke 24:25) Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! (NKJV)

If you don't take advise because you think you know it all the Bible calls you a fool. Fools are in comparison to the wise . The wise take council but the fools don't. The wise takes care of thier steps. The fool falls into a pit.

The Book of Proverbs can be divided into the following :

1:1-6 Introduction

1:7-9:18 Instruction from a Father to a Son

10-22:16 Proverbs of king Solomon

22:17-24:22 Words of the Wise

25-29 More Proverbs of king Solomon

30 Proverbs of king Agur

31 Proverbs of king Lemuel

As one read the Book of Proverbs , it is important to seek Jesus in it . Because one will find him. For example the early church saw wisdom as a type or person of Jesus. Although Wisdom is seen in most Bibles as She many of the early church Fathers understood it to be in refferance to or type of Jesus.

(Proverbs 8:1-3) Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice? She takes her stand on the top of the high hill, Beside the way, where the paths meet. She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, At the entrance of the doors: (NKJV)

(1 Corinthians 1:30) But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God--and righteousness and sanctification and redemption-- (NKJV)

Wisdom is not created for it always was with God otherwise there would be a time when God would be not complete.

For example look at what the early church Father Eusebius states in Book 1 Chapter 2 Section 3 {"For alone who beside the Father could clearly understand the Light which was before the world, the intellectual and essential Wisdom which existed before the ages, the living Word which was in the beginning with the Father and which was God, the first and only begotten of God which was before every creature and creation visible and invisible, the commander-in-chief of the rational and immortal host of heaven, the messenger of the great counsel, the executor of the Father's unspoken will, the creator, with the Father, of all things, the second cause of the universe after the Father, the true and only-begotten Son of God, the Lord and God and King of all created things, the one who has received dominion and power, with divinity itself, and with might and honor from the Father; as it is said in regard to him in the mystical passages of Scripture which speak of his divinity: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and

the Word was God.””}

Also if we take a look at Proverbs 30 we see a clear reference to God having a Son.

(Proverbs 30:4) Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, If you know? (NKJV)

King Agur asks the question what is God's Son's name ? And we can answer this question and state his name is Jesus.

So the book of proverbs is not Just a book on wise saying but also a book that we can see Jesus before his incarnation. It is also a book on prophecy , It gives us a hint of God having a son and in doing so prepares us for the New Testament to get to know him better. When we read God the Father pointing to Jesus and saying this is my beloved Son.

(Matthew 3:17) And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (NKJV)

And Saying to Jesus "You are my beloved Son"

(Mark 1:11) Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (NKJV)

This is why Mark starts his Gospel with the words

(Mark 1:1) The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (NKJV)

Jesus is the one who all the books of the Bible speaks about .

(Luke 24:25-27) Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. (NKJV)

Jesus is the focus of our worship along with the Father and Holy Spirit. Life should be all about him.